



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **District Man Pleads Guilty to Voluntary Manslaughter In Killing of His Then-Girlfriend's 20-Month-Old Son - Child Had Numerous Injuries, Marks and Bruises -**

WASHINGTON - Steven Allen Cephas, 21, also known as Savion Allen Dawson, of Washington, D.C., pled guilty today to a felony charge in the death of his then-girlfriend's 20-month-old son, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Cephas pled guilty this morning in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to a charge of voluntary manslaughter. The Honorable William M. Jackson scheduled sentencing for October 28, 2011. Cephas faces up to 30 years in prison.

According to evidence presented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia Wright, Cephas was at an apartment in the 5000 block of Jay Street NE on November 8, 2010, babysitting his girlfriend's 20-month-old son, Dominic Kingsbury Jr., while she went to work. Prior to leaving for work, the mother reported that her son showed no signs of distress, bruising or injuries.

At approximately 12:30 a.m., Cephas called his girlfriend and stated the child had stopped breathing. She then called Dominic's grandmother, who came immediately to the apartment. Evidence showed that Cephas had caused injuries to the child while he was alone with him.

When the grandmother arrived, she observed Dominic lying face up with marks and bruising on his face and stomach. She cried for help, and a neighbor called 911. The neighbor reported that the child was cold to the touch, with no pulse, unconscious, and unresponsive.

Members of the D.C. Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services arrived and transported Dominic, who had cardiac arrest, to Children's National Medical Center. At 3:17 a.m., the little boy was pronounced dead. An autopsy indicated that he suffered from acute multiple blunt force injuries to the body, along with hemorrhages, lacerations of the intestine and liver, and spinal cord contusions. The manner of death was ruled a homicide.

The evidence indicates that Cephas was the only person caring for the child at the time of his injuries. When initially questioned by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Cephas provided a false name of "Savion Allen Dawson" and was released by the police. His true name later was discovered and he was arrested by the U.S. Marshals Service on November 10, 2010.

At the time of Dominic's death, Cephas was pending jail time for violating the conditions of his probation in another case, involving charges of assault with a dangerous weapon and carrying a pistol without a license. On July 29, 2010, the Honorable Judge Herbert B. Dixon, Jr. revoked the defendant's probation and had ordered him to be turned over to the U.S. Marshals to serve a sentence. But first, Judge Dixon gave Cephas 15 minutes to turn over his property to family members. Instead of complying, Cephas fled. After Cephas's arrest in the murder case, Judge Dixon revoked his probation and sentenced him to seven years of incarceration.

In announcing today's guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of MPD Detectives Carlos Hilliard and Gina Powell, Sgt. Robert Parker, Mobile Crime Officers Petheria McIver, John R. Holder, Jay Gregory, and Tony Nwami, and Technicians, Eric S. Coker and Stan Rembish. He also commended Pete Amico of the U.S. Marshals Service.

U.S. Attorney Machen also praised the work of those who handled the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Paralegal Specialists Kelly Blakeney, Delissa Rivers, Mark Silberstein and Alesha Mathews-Yette, and Victim Witness Advocate, Marcey Rinker. He also commended the efforts of Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia G. Wright, who investigated and prosecuted the case.

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